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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4531st meeting

Tuesday, 14 May 2002, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Mahbubani	(Singapore)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

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02-38076 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/532, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Bulgaria, China, France, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic, keen on improving the draft resolution contained in document S/2002/532 and dated 13 May 2002, had earlier submitted the following constructive proposals.

First, the objective of the proposals was to avoid the shortcomings in the performance of the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) that have emerged in recent years, especially with regard to contracts whose values exceed $5 billion. It was our hope that the new measures would include actual alleviation of the previous procedures and would compose a sound mechanism that would facilitate the work of contracts, stop their blocking for political reasons and improve procedures, in particular with regard to contracts relating to humanitarian materials.

Secondly, the proposals were intended to ensure that Iraq is not denied its natural right to acquire means for self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, provided that they do not include weapons of mass destruction.

Thirdly, we wished to ensure that the Iraqi people were not prevented from acquiring the technology necessary to reconstruct their infrastructure, which has been destroyed, and to guarantee their sustainable development by including the necessary text in the draft resolution.

Fourthly, we meant to overcome the bureaucratic restraints that could arise as a result of the implementation of the resolution and the list of measures annexed to it; to expedite the arrival in Iraq of supplies and commodities in general, in particular humanitarian supplies; and to endeavour not to increase costs for exporters, because such encumbrances will be a heavy burden on the Iraqi people. For that reason, we should include in the draft resolution modalities that would ensure meeting the needs of the Iraqi people, who have already suffered enough because of the sanctions.

However, since discussion on the Syrian proposals reached an impasse during the experts meetings held to consider those proposals, my country's delegation believes it has a duty to explain its vote on the draft resolution.

First, Syria believes that it is high time to lift the sanctions to which the brotherly Iraqi people have been subjected for 12 years.

Secondly, we believe that necessity compels us to encourage Iraq to continue its dialogue with the Secretary-General in order to reach a positive outcome that will lead to the final lifting of the sanctions imposed on Iraq. In our view, it is incomprehensible that the Council continues to impose sanctions for unlimited periods of time.

Thirdly, Council members undoubtedly appreciate the difficulty of Syria's position, especially in the light of Arab public opinion. On the one hand, the Council has lost its credibility by compelling some countries, and not others, to implement its resolutions, owing to the positions of some permanent Council members that have helped Israel to disregard those resolutions and have encouraged it to refuse to comply with international legitimacy. However, what is required of Syria now is to vote for a draft resolution that will extend the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people — an Arab people who have already suffered greatly.

Fourthly, in the light of double standards in this situation, Syria totally rejects the policy of double standards that has manifested itself clearly during this period, whereby Israel carried out its policy of blatant aggression against the Palestinian people, despite the statements of United Nations representatives concerning the war crimes that it committed in Jenin. Nonetheless, the Security Council failed to dispatch the fact-finding team and could not secure respect for resolution 1405 (2002). Is there a clearer example of double standards than that?

Fifthly, my delegation will follow closely the implementation of this resolution and its implications for the brotherly Iraqi people. We will pursue the matter during the coming six-month review of this programme.

In the context of this explanation, I should like to reaffirm that the Syrian Arab Republic, as a result of its concern for the real unity of the Security Council and its commitment to be an example with respect to the resolutions of international legitimacy, and in an attempt to give the Council a new opportunity to regain and rebuild its credibility, and despite the difficult and critical position that it is now taking, again for the sake of Council unity, will join the consensus and vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

The President: It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1409 (2002).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.